

An Initiative of the ...

Dept. of Workforce Development
Department of Education
Division of Employment and Training
Dept. of Transitional Assistance
Commonwealth Corporation

# In the Fall of 2001, the Partners collaborated to design the BEST Initiative. The Goals of the Initiative are:

- 1. Address the front-line workforce development needs of Massachusetts employers, industries, and sectors, particularly in those experiencing or anticipating skill shortages.
- 2. Improve basic foundational or occupational skills of Massachusetts workers to support employment and career mobility.
- 3. Provide opportunities and resources to Regional Industry Teams to develop and implement innovative workforce development models that drive systemic change.

In the Fall of 2002, a group of Partners worked cooperatively to design the...

**BEST for Older Youth Initiative** 

The partners...

Department of Education
Department of Workforce Development
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#### **BEST For Older Youth Initiative Priorities...**

- Support integration of basic education services, employability skill development, occupational training, and youth workforce development system services.
- Address the needs of older youth in the areas of academic skill attainment, acquisition of a high school diploma or GED, and increased employability skill development leading to specific employment opportunities.
- Conduct creative demonstration programs.
- Address the workforce development needs of Massachusetts employers, industries, and sectors.
- Coordinate program funding with other youth and workforce development efforts.

The Partners funded youth projects in seven WIBs. All projects offered integrated basic skills and occupational training.

### Those funded...

- Boston Private Industry Council: Web production, commercial drivers license, culinary arts, appliance repair, facilities maintenance and customer service
- Bristol Workforce Investment Board:
   Manufacturing and health care
- Franklin Hampshire Regional Employment Board: Culinary arts and hospitality

- Greater Lowell Workforce Investment Board:
   Financial and human services.
- Lower Merrimack Valley Workforce Investment Board: Banking
- Metro North Regional Employment Board: Health care
- Southern Essex Workforce Investment Board: Plumbing, electrical, carpentry and auto mechanics

# BEST for Older Youth Accomplishments....

- An interagency team, including representatives of SABES, planned and provided training and technical assistance to all projects. This group successfully planned and conducted 13 training sessions for projects
- 384 youth (ages 18 24) were enrolled and received integrated basic skills and occupational training. This was 109% of plan.
- So far....
  - --25% of the youth entered employment
  - --12.5% entered advanced training
  - --50% got GED's or achieved their educational goals
  - --46% received certification or achieved their occupational goals

• BEST has already impacted the lives of our youth:

I like the people and teachers in the class. JIF gave me a chance to learn about financing and managing my life. I really want to continue my education, get my master degree and own a business. JIF is the road that brings me to the education highway, towards my career in the future."

"My goal is to keep on with my education and to work in the bank. Now I know I can be anything I put my mind too. I am somebody and my life does matter. My life will make a difference."

# For More Information About BEST For Older Youth

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